

Appl. No. 10/798,927
Response dated July 11, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 12, 2005

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). An apparatus for stacking sail cars carrying the sail of a sail boat, comprising a track along which said cars of the sail ride, the track comprising a first, vertical upper section having one track rail and a second lower section including at least a port and a starboard tracks rails; ~~the cars each having~~ guide structure means thereon for guiding cars to opposite tracks rails of the lower section, effectively reducing the vertical height of the stacked cars when the sail is stowed.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended). A method for stacking sail cars to effectively reduce a vertical height of the sail cars when stacked upon stowage of the sail, the method comprising the steps of:

creating a track for engaging the sail cars, the track having an upper vertical centerline section and a lower section including at least a port and starboard storage tracks;
creating ~~track and the cars with~~ guide means ~~structure thereon~~ for guiding cars to opposite storage tracks of the lower section; and
stowing the sail by lowering same along the track until the cars are received within the port and starboard storage tracks, serving as stowage tracks.

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Claim 3 (Original). An apparatus for compacting sail cars comprising a mast track along which cars of the sail ride, the track comprising a vertical upper section and a lower section including at least a port and a starboard storage track; the cars and tracks having switch means for alternately switching cars to opposite tracks of the lower section, effectively reducing the vertical height of the stacked cars when the sail is stowed, the track also incorporating structure for maintaining at least the bottom cars of the sail along a centerline of the mast rather than to either side thereof.

Claim 4 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, further including sail switch means between said upper and lower section for transferring cars from between said upper section and said at least port and starboard track rails of said lower section.

Claim 5 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, further including a mast and boom, said upper section extending up said mast to generally its upper end, said lower section's at least port and starboard track rails extending from adjacent said upper section to adjacent said boom.

Claim 6 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 5, further including said switch means between said upper and lower section for transferring cars between said upper section and said at least port and starboard track rails of said lower section.

Claim 7 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein said switch means pivots.

Claim 8 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 6, wherein said switch means pivots.

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Claim 9 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein said switch means comprises a “frog” track section.

Claim 10 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 6, wherein said switch means comprises a “frog” track section.

Claim 11 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein at least some said cars carry a sail.

Claim 12 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein at least some of said cars carry battens for a sail.

Claim 13 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein at least one of said cars carries a head board for a sail.

Claim 14 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein at least two of said cars are mounted together.

Claim 15 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein at least some of said cars carry a sail.

Claim 16 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein at least some of said cars carry a batten for a sail.

Claim 17 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein the lower section has at least three storage track rails.

Claim 18 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein the lower section has at least four storage track rails.

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Claim 19 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein another track rail is located between said at least two track rails of said lower sections, and one or more cars adjacent said boom are located on said another track rail.

Claim 20 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein at least one or more cars adjacent said boom ride on and between said port and starboard track rails.

Claim 21 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, for the mast and sail of a Marconi rig.

Claim 22 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein said cars carry means to stagger said cars on said port and starboard track rails of said lower section.

Claim 23 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 22, wherein said means to stagger includes a guide pin that rides in said track.

Claim 24 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 22, wherein said car is constructed to place said pin in one position to cause the car to go to the starboard track rail and in a second position to cause the car to go to the port track rail.

Claim 25 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 7, wherein pivot is at the top.

Claim 26 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 4, wherein one or more cars adjacent said boom are carried upon cars riding both said port and starboard track rails.

Claim 27 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein one of said lower track rails aligns vertically below said upper track rail and said other track rail is offset to the side of the said one lower track rail.

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Claim 28 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein cam means are provided to move said cars onto one or the other of said lower track rails.

Claim 29 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, for a sail of at least 60 feet in height.

Claim 30 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, for a sail of at least 75 feet in height.

Claim 31 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, for a sail of at least 250 feet in height.

Claim 32 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein the lower section has at least two storage track rails and the height of the stored stack sail on said at least two storage track rails is about one half of that were the lower section not used.

Claim 33 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein the lower section has at least three storage track rails and the height of the stored stacked sail on said at least three storage track rails is about one third of that were the lower section not used.

Claim 34 (New). The apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein the lower section has at least four storage track rails and the height of the stored stacked sail on said at least four storage track rails is about one quarter of that were the lower section not used.

Claim 35 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 3, wherein said switch means comprises a movable section for moving cars between the upper section and lower section's storage track rails.

Claim 36 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 35, wherein said movable section pivots.

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Claim 37 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 35, wherein said movable section slides.

Claim 38 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein said guide means comprises one of pin means, magnet means, and cam means for moving the cars to different storage track rails.

Claim 39 (New). An apparatus as in Claim 1, wherein the apparatus may be utilized to store or reef the sail.

Claim 40 (New). An apparatus for fully raising and stowing a sail on the mast and along the boom of a sail boat, said sail being carried by a plurality of sail cars and batten cars up and down the mast, comprising a track on the mast along which the plurality of sail cars and batten cars can ride to raise or stow the sail, the track comprising a vertical upper section along which the sail cars and batten cars and sail can be raised, a lower section adjacent the boom along which the sail cars and batten cars and sail can be stowed, the lower section including at least a port and starboard tracks on to which the sail cars and batten cars can be moved to stow the sail, guide means for said sail cars or batten cars for guiding adjacent sail or batten cars to said at least port and starboard tracks of the lower section to stow the sail, and the sail cars and batten cars are stacked on the lower section's at least port and starboard tracks, effectively reducing the vertical height of the stacked sail cars and batten cars to at least half height when the sail is stowed.